

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Interagency Task Force on Dual Credit

History/Background

Existing Policy. In April 2006, the Kentucky Department of Education recommended that the Interagency Task Force on Dual Credit be established with representation from the Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, local districts, and public and independent institutions. The Board called for the Task Force to examine the need for comprehensive policy and make recommendations in the broad issue areas of rigor, access, affordability and program evaluation for dual credit.

For the purposes of the Task Force, the Board identified the scope of work as specific to dual credit, rather than the broader range of credit-based transition opportunities (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment.) “Dual credit” refers to the enrollment of a high school student in a college level course for which both high school and college credit are granted upon successful completion.

The Task Force

The Task Force held its first meeting in June 2006 and has held monthly meetings since that time. Hilma Prather, former Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) member, serves as chair and will be at the December meeting as part of the presentation team on this topic. Response to the KBE’s invitation to participate on the Task Force was strong and participation continues to expand. Janna Vice represents the KBE as a member of the Task Force. The community college system, all public colleges and universities, and the private colleges are represented. District participation is strong. Parents are represented through the statewide Parent Teachers Association and a member of the Commissioner’s Parent Advisory Council. Workforce is represented through the Department of Workforce Investment. Student input will be gathered through the work groups, of which there are five.

The Task Force adopted a Vision Statement for dual credit in Kentucky, which includes anticipated benefits and essential conditions. (See Appendix A)

The work of the Task Force is carried forward through five work groups. These groups are comprised of members and additional resource persons in the issue areas:

- Alignment and Rigor
- Planning, Advising and Transferability
- Certification and Qualification

- Program Evaluation
- Access and Affordability

A high-level summary of the issues being addressed by each work group is included as Appendix B.

The workgroups will bring preliminary findings and recommendations back to the Task Force for consideration by and guidance from the entire group. The Task Force has also identified other entities whose input must be sought as this work progresses through placement on meeting agendas, such as the State P16 Council and the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB). The Task Force's intention is that the recommendations eventually developed represent a broad consensus of the major stakeholders around a common vision.

While the Task Force has good representation from major stakeholders in Kentucky, its ability to synthesize national research and to conduct research is very limited. Through a Kentucky Community and Technical College grant from the Ford Foundation, the Task Force has the opportunity to engage researchers from Jobs for the Future (JFF). The Task Force has identified preliminary research questions (Appendix C) and is working with JFF to finalize a scope of work. This work will have two strands:

- Analysis of research and existing policy frameworks in other states that will inform the Task Force's initial recommendations. (Examples of other state policy frameworks are included as Appendix D.)
- Design of a long-term research agenda in Kentucky, with specific emphasis on ensuring that the data elements required are built into the design for KIDS and the CPE and EPSB data system enhancements.

The deliverables from the JFF research team will be delivered in phases, beginning in late December and continuing through February. At that time, the Task Force will begin crafting recommendations to be delivered to the KBE in April. It is likely that the Task Force will request continued authorization, beyond April, so that it may pursue longer-term issues of greater depth and complexity. For example, determining the extent to which dual credit experiences are yielding the benefits anticipated will require longitudinal study. Also, some recommendations – such as those impacting instructor certification - will require coordination and interaction among multiple Boards [KBE, EPSB, and Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE)] and that will take additional time.

KBE Discussion

At the December meeting, the Task Force is seeking Board reaction regarding the Vision Statement as the framework for developing recommendations.

- Does the Board concur with the Vision Statement (Appendix A)?

Before the Task Force finalizes the research agenda with JFF, does the Board have guidance?

- Are these the most important questions? Where would the Board place priority with regard to research (Appendix C)?

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

The high school experience is not meaningful for every child. Therefore, comprehensive action research focused on the middle and high school experience as well as school and district efforts to provide opportunities for success for all students is critical.

Participation in dual credit is growing rapidly in Kentucky. We need to ensure that those experiences are positive ones that increase student progress towards attainment of a student's long-term educational and career goals.

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